XIO3

GCACE

Garden City Atari Computer Enthusiasts
1003 Amphion St. Victoria, B.C. Canada V8S 4G2
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1997

ATARI® NEWS AND RUMOURS

by Rowland Grant

They're still selling Atari. All the physical assets of Atari were sold off awhile ago. Now the patents and copyrights are going. Recently Activision acquired the rights to the vintage Atari games Asteroids and Battlezone. The revenue from Atari's assets are helping prolong the life of JTS. The product line of JTS is changing rapidly, but competition is fierce. While JTS is getting ready for "aggressive market expansion" so is the competition. New product development is now very rapid in the hard drive industry. It is easy for a smaller competitor to fall behind in speed and capacity. So far JTS seems to be able to keep its products competitive, but it needs to make profits soon. Investors are not very optimistic. JTS stock is trading around 50 cents.

New games for the Atari Jaguar are still coming out. The excellent Iron Soldier 2 was originally released on CD-ROM. Now a limited edition cartridge version of Iron soldier 2 will be available directly from Telegames. If there are sufficient pre-orders, the cartridge will be shipped in December this year. The price is $69.99 (US) plus shipping. Telegames has just released a new game called Zero-5 for the Jaguar. This seems to be a super shoot-em-up type game. The reviewers give Zero-5 high marks for graphics and sound, but an average rating for game play. The cartridge sells for $59.95. Coding for the long awaited Battlesphere game is finished, and this game is now in play testing. If all goes well it could be available for the holiday season. There have been various reports of brisk sales of Jaguar consoles in various outlets. If most of the remaindered stock has been sold, this could represent a significant expansion of the user base. A number of Electronics Boutique stores are

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MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues are $25 per family per year. Membership includes a subscription to this newsletter, access to over 1000 8-bit public domain disks and 199 ST disks and increased time and upload/download ratio on the club BBS, Pothole. It can be reached by modem at (604) 642-6795.

MEETINGS

Meetings will be held in the Nellie McClung branch of the Library at 3950 Cedar Hill Road (corner of McKenzie) on the fourth Thursday of each month. All meetings are at 7 pm. There is no meeting in the month of December.

EDITORIAL

At long last I finally have my TT up and working with all the peripherals running. This is because of a lot of help from club members, in particular John Towler and Craig Carmichael. This leaves me with one computer too many, so the Mega4 STe is up for sale. 'the complete system consists of the computer, which has TOS 2.05 and a 105 meg internal hard drive, an SM 125 high rez monitor, 1n SC 1224 colour monitor and a Monitor Master to switch between the two. There is also a NewIdea mouse, much superior to the original. The hard drive is full of software, including Calamus 1.09 and Calamus SL, yet still has 85 megs unused. Also included is a DVT VCR Backup system, including hardware and software, so you can backup the hard drive with your VCR. The STe was the last and most advanced in the ST series. My asking price is $400. Anybody interested can phone me at (250) 475-0857.

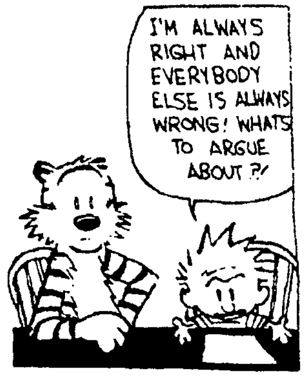
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PEEKing Around

by Gordon F Hooper



... Welcome to new corresponding member RICHARD JONES from Parma, Iowa JOSEF DZIEWULSKI from Duncan renewed his membership. When the days get longer next summer, we'd be interested in seeing you at a meeting again, Josef ... CRAIG CARMICHAEL has released his operating system, Oases, as freeware. Anyone wishing to experiment with it, kindly contact Craig at 384-2626 ... ROWLAND GRANT brought a couple of 8-bit 1050 drives to the November executive meeting to give to CLIFF BOUVETTE, who is our new 8-bit librarian ... I had a CDROM I couldn't get to work with my system and BRUCE FUNK had an extra Syquest 44 MEG removable disk drive he didn't use, but I needed, so we swapped. He couldn't get the CDROM to work, and I naturally couldn't get the Syquest to work, so we're back to square one ... BOB NEX had a problem with one of the hard drives on the Pothole a while ago. It's a lot of work getting it done, but Bob says he'll work on it when he gets the chance, so we might see it again ...

Actual dialog of a former WordPerfect Customer Support employee:

TECH: "Ridge Hall computer assistant; may I help you?"
CUST: "Yes, well, I'm having trouble with WordPerfect." TECH: "What sort of trouble?" CUST: "Well, I was just typing along, and all of a sudden the words went away." TECH: "Went away?" CUST: "They disappeared." TECH: "Hmm. So what does your screen look like now?" CUST: "Nothing." TECH: "Nothing?" CUST: "It's blank; it won't accept anything when I type." TECH: "Are you still in WordPerfect, or did you get out?" CUST: "How do I tell?" TECH: "Can you see the "C" prompt on the screen?" CUST: "What's a sea-prompt?" TECH: "Never mind. Can you move the cursor around on the screen?" CUST: "There isn't any cursor: I told you, it won't accept anything I type." TECH: "Does your monitor have a power indicator?" CUST: "What's a monitor?" TECH: "It's the thing with the screen on it that looks like a TV. Does it have a little light that tells you when it's on?" CUST: "I don't know." TECH: "Well, then look on the back of the monitor and find where the power cord goes into it. Can you see that?" CUST: "...Yes, I think so." TECH: "Great! Follow the cord to the plug, and tell me if it's plugged into the wall." CUST: "...Yes, it is." TECH: "When you were behind the monitor, did you notice that there were two cables plugged into the back of it, not just one?" CUST: "No." TECH: "Well, there are. I need you to look back there again and find the other cable." CUST: "...Okay, here it is." TECH: "Follow it for me, and tell me if it's plugged securely into the back of your computer." CUST: "I can't reach." TECH: "Uh huh. Well, can you see if it is?" CUST: "No." TECH: "Even if you maybe put your knee on something and lean way over?" CUST: "Oh, it's not because I don't have the right angle-it's because it's dark." TECH: "Dark?" CUST: "Yes-the office light is off, and the only light I have is coming in from the window." TECH: "Well, turn on the office light then." CUST: "I can't." TECH: "No? Why not?" CUST: "Because there's a power outage." TECH: "A power... a power outage? Aha! Okay, we've got it licked now. Do you still have the boxes and manuals and packing stuff your computer came in?" CUST: "Well, yes, I keep them in the closet." TECH: "Good! Go get them, and unplug your system and pack it up just like it was when you got it. Then take it back to the store you bought it from." CUST: "Really? Is it that bad?" TECH: "Yes, I'm afraid it is." CUST: "Well, all right then, I suppose. What do I tell them?" TECH: "Tell them you're too stupid to own a computer." ... *Courtesy Doug Skrecky*

...You're not paranoid, my GCACE spies are actually following you. Don't let that stop you from getting into scandalous situations. Better yet, follow someone else, make them paranoid and send all dirty details to GORD at 475-0857 ...

Atari Gets Honourable Mention!

by Doug Skrecky

I was reading an issue of Isaac Asimov's science fiction magasine recently, when I came across a mention of Atari. The issue was the February 1986 one, the story was called Salvage, and was set in the future, where our "hero" made a living doing salvage work.

Quote: Lehi McKay paid no attention. He was sitting in front of a TV screen, jerking at a black box he held on his lap. "You do that and you'll go blind," said Deaver. "Shut up carpface." Lehi never took his eyes off the screen. He jabbed at a button on the black box and twisted on the stick that jutted up from it. A colored blob on the screen blew up and split into four smaller blobs. "I got three days off while they do the transmission on the truck," said Deaver. "So tommorrow's the temple expedition." Lehi got the last blob off the screen. More blobs appeared. "That's real fun," said Deaver, "like sweepin' the street and then they bring along another troop of horses." "It's an Atari. From the sixties or seventies or something. Eighties. Old. Can't do much with the pieces, it's only eight-bit stuff. All these years in somebody's attic in Logan, and the sucker still runs." "Old guy probably didn't even know they

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reported to be selling new Jaguar titles. The Jaguar is not dead yet, just abandoned.

When Atari wound down, expert Jaguar programmer Jeff Mintner joined the Jaguar designers John Mathieson and Richard Miller to take part in a secret project. This seems to be a new game machine that is much more advanced than any now available. Games for this machine are supposedly easy to program, and there are rumours that certain developers already have kits. Anyway, this project seems to be finished, and Jeff has gone home to Wales. There are rumours that a major electronics manufacturer (perhaps Motorola) is backing the project. Production is rumoured to begin soon. If these rumours have foundation, I hope that the new game machine will have better direction and support than Atari was able to give the Jaguar.

Ron Luks founded and managed the Atari Forums on Compuserve for the last sixteen years. Ron is now leaving Compuserve and the Atari Forums will be closed. Users of these forums have slowly dwindled. Over the last few years Ron ran the Atari Forums at a loss. There is some hope that the Computer Club Forum will open an Atari section. However for legal reasons, the existing Atari software libraries cannot be moved. At the same time, Compuserve appears to have been sold to rival America Online. Ron Luks has joined Microsoft to help that poor little struggling company fix its hitherto unsuccessful Microsoft Network.

CURRENT NOTES

Where's GCACE's $32 bucks, Howard?

Our worst fears concerning Current Notes have been confirmed. Howard Carson, the editor, has suspended publication indefinitely. Apparently the major advertiser, Toad Computers pulled its ads. Also there are rumours that Toad did not pay for some past advertising. Howard joined MGI to promote Calamus on the PC. He had to step in to run The Toronto Atari Federation for a while too. Howard faced burnout and something had to go.

Hisoft is still selling Atari software, but Hisoft is no longer developing Atari software itself. They are still supporting the Amiga, however. While the Twist 2 database is available for the ST, Twist 3 has been released for the Amiga, and it is loaded with new features. There are reports that a demo of Twist 3 was released for ST computers. Anyway, Hisoft did release Papyrus 5 word processor last April. It was a rushed job with many typos in the menus, even the menu entry for the spellchecker was misspelled. Another popular word processor, First Word, reached version 3.2 some years ago. First Word was then completely reworked and published as version 4 in 1993. It supported vector fonts among many new features. Unfortunately Compo Software went out of business before it could release the new version in English. There are rumours that a Dutch version is available.

There has been some concern over the future of Computer Direct in Edmonton. This is the sole Canadian Atari dealer and one of the few in North America. Uwe Seimet announced that Computer Direct had lost the distribution rights to his software, namely OUTSIDE and HDDRIVER. Apparently Computer Direct hadn't paid the licence fee for OUTSIDE. HDDRIVER is a very popular product, allowing TOS computers to use of almost any type of hard drive peripheral. Uwe had tried and failed to get in touch with Chris Krowchuck at Computer Direct. This led to some speculation that Computer Direct had gone under. Mike Kerslake of Atari Computingalso expressed concern as he couldn't get E-mail through. Subsequently communication with Computer Direct was restored. I understand that Chris will be travelling to Europe to settle his problems with the European suppliers, and attend some computer shows. Computer Direct is still in business, at least for now.

There is a lot of interest in TOS users getting on the Web. Work is still underway on software that makes Web access possible at least and convenient at best. ASH has released CAB version 2.54 of this popular browser. With it is PPP-Connect that requires a pre-emptive multitasking system such as Magic or MINT. For full Web access one requires a host of other utilities. ASH is now developing a complete internet suite of utilities called Internet Office. This software will include news and Email handlers to go with CAB and PPP-Connect. CAB 2.5 has just become available in English. Fortunately, the latest version, CAB 2.54 does not require a new manual. CAB 2.5 supports the latest HTML extensions. CAB comes with the OLGA object linking system which allows a document to be linked to several programs in a multitasking system. CAB also comes with six module programs that give CAB special features. Included are CABsurf that automatically downloads individual Web pages, and CABcom that filters out advertising. PPP-Connect itself is made up of several programs. There is SOCKETS.PRG which provides the kernel functions. ICONF.PRG configures internet access settings. ICONNECT.PRG is the dialling and connecting program; it uses PPP or SLIP protocols. It also provides online feedback. There is a CAB overlay module that allows CAB 2.5 to go online. CAB 2.5 with PPP-Connect is distributed by System Solutions in Britain. However Systems for Tomorrow in the U.S. is now listing it at $49.99 U.S.

There was another commercial Web

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software system. The WENsuite web system was being developed by OxO Concept, but that firm went bankrupt. However the programmers restarted the firm as OxO Systems to continue development of WENsuite. They have been releasing beta copies. The French version of WENsuite v2.21 was released. The PPPLink part of WENsuite has been reported as being easy to set up, but other users have experienced difficulties.

Peter Rottengatter has been continually improving STing, his freeware PPP connector. There were many reports that it almost worked but not quite. However after the latest round of bug fixes, there have been numerous reports of success. Combined with other freeware and shareware programs such as CAB 1.5 and NEWsie, STing can be the foundation of a complete Web accessing system. The other popular connector is STiK. So far STiK only handles SLIP protocol. Of the numerous utilities that can be used with STiK is POPwatch. The latest version of this mailbox tool includes a 'reject message' option to ward off junk email. POPwatch also works with NEWsie, the newsgroup utility.

Conquest of Elysium is a new game for the Atari Falcon. This is a fantasy game of huge proportions with about three hundred different kinds of monsters. It runs in true colour and uses at least 4 MB of memory. A demo version is now available. Applications are still being upgraded. The latest version (4.1) of Imagecopy is now available from Computer Direct. Imagecopy converts images to or from various formats, prints to colour printers, catalogues images, and creates slideshows of images. Another popular application is ICD SCSI PRO driver software for SCSI devices. ICD claims that the new version 7.0 is a complete rewrite of the device drivers and utilities. It sells as an upgrade for $39.95.

Software is also required if you want to network a number of TOS computers. Markus Fichtenbauer has finished work on software that allows the use of PCI-Ethernet cards to network Hades computers. He calls his software DEC-driver. He has released version 0.95 as Cardware (ie. send him a postcard to register it). A network of Hades computers, that would be nice! Another interesting release from Europe is ETH Oberon System V4 for the Atari ST/TT. Oberon is a computer operating system combined with a programming language. It was developed by Nicklaus Wirth and others at ETH in Zurich. Wirth is the inventor of the popular Pascal language and Modula-2. Oberon seems to use Modula-2 syntax. As an operating system it uses a graphical interface that features non-overlapping windows, each with its own drop-down menu bar. Oberon also uses a three button mouse. The Atari version includes a serial mouse driver. I gather that Simon Egli adapted Oberon to TOS computers. He has released it for testing and feedback. A hard drive and at least 2MB of RAM is required. I have a copy if anyone is interested.

Frank Perrey in Germany is selling a TT-RAM card manufactured by Catch-Computer. It comes with 32MB, but can handle up to 128MB. He doesn't quote a prices however. And Mark Slagell in the U.S. has released a new version of TOS-BOX. This is a ST emulator for MS-DOS and Windows computers. At present it is shareware ($15), and is still in beta testing. A full release version is promised soon. Atari Times newsletter has rated the IDEal interface as the best Atari add-on for 1997. Apparently this enables the installation of small 2.5 inch IDE hard drives in 1040 STe computers. It costs about 60 UK pounds.

I have been using a Roland 1111 (Panasonic) dot-matrix printer for the last 13 years. It has served me well. In fact we used it to publish XIO3 for awhile. Recently I bought a Hewlett Packard Deskjet 670C because the price was very attractive and the print quality was excellent. But would it run on my ST? I found out quickly that the printer was configured using software on Windows/DOS computers. Not easily done on the ST. However if I was prepared to settle for black on white, the ST should run it. According to the manual, printing ASCII from a text editor gives the default font. This is 10 pitch 12 point Courier in 600 by 300 dpi. I tried it and the printer worked. The page looked like it was typed on an IBM Selectric. So the HP670C is not going to be a doorstop. I found that the last upgrade of Word Perfect had drivers for all the internal fonts in a HP500 series. I tried them and they work just as well on the HP670C. I can't mix fonts, but what the heck, Word Perfect is not a desktop publisher. But I can use a desktop publisher, as both Calamus and PageStream have drivers for the HP500 series. And I am told that they will do colour too.

I notice that I am not the only one to buy one of the latest inkjet printers hoping that it will run when attached to a TOS machines. For those using software that employs GDOS or SpeedoGDOS, there is a source of current drivers. This is the NVDI screen accelerator and font engine. The latest version NVDI 4.11 seems to have drivers for the whole Hewlett Packard range of Deskjets up to HP660C and for a series of Epson colour inkjets as well. But there are some printers that TOS computers cannot handle. For instance, Lexmark printers cost less than almost any other line. However they are completely tuned to Windows, and will not respond to standard printer control languages.

There has been a lot of talk lately about the year 2000 bug. Most soft-

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UNIX For The 8-Bit?

by Rowland Grant

I notice one Atari old timer is selling off his 8-bit stuff and another one is trying to get some. Gary Furr worked for Atari from 1981 to 1983, and in 1982 he designed and managed the development of the AtariWriter cartridge. After leaving Atari, Gary created and sold printer drivers for the AtariWriter cartridge. This was a valuable service as the AtariWriter cartridge had drivers for Atari printers only (if I recall rightly). Gary says that he sold his last printer driver only a few months ago. Now he is selling everything, even the original design drafts of the Atari 1200XL.

Austin Franklin was surprised to learn that people are still using the Atari 800, and it has revived his own interest in Atari computers. Austin used to have a company that developed and manufactured memory boards (48K) for the Atari 800 and Atari 400. But the most interesting item was an 80 column board for the Atari 800 known as the Austin-80. He says that he sold over ten thousand memory boards and about 500 Austin-80 boards. In fact he still has a few left which he will sell for a nominal sum ($25 for the 48K board and $50 for the Austin-80).

Austin was doing well until Atari brought out the 1200XL with no expansion slots. Worse, Atari then decided to sell mainly through department stores and big distributors. Austin had set up a distribution network of about 1000 resellers. After Atari changed its policy there were less than 100 resellers left. At that point Austin decided to stop production. Many other Atari third party suppliers stopped supporting Atari for the same reason. The Atari management from Warner never gave any consideration to the supporting industry, it probably wasn't aware of it. Their policy killed the enthusiasm. The Atari computer market began to decline. Things really didn't pick up until Jack Tramiel took over and slashed the prices of the 800XL and 1050 drives.

The Austin-80 board had its own monitor output and was controlled by a cartridge that went into the right slot in the 800. The cartridge software used memory outside of the main 48K at unused addresses hex D500 to D5FF. The code in the cartridge switched between 16 banks of memory, each bank containing 256 bytes. Apparently the BIOS checks for data starting at D500. This made it possible for the cartridge to install itself as the default display. Any other program that used the standard BIOS calls for text displays would work with the Austin-80 board. They even had a VT100 terminal program to work with the board. Also there was a special cartridge that worked with the ATR800 interface (for CPM). I recall that David Small discovered that when debugging code, the running program could be seen using the regular Antic output and the corresponding code could be seen in the 80 column output. Atari game programmer John Harris also reported using this feature.

Steven Tucker is proposing to design an interface that allows a separate keyboard to be attached to an Atari 8-bit. The AT keyboard has all sorts of extra keys. So the interface will have an eprom for saving custom macros to use these keys. Steven could make a circuit board for this interface if anyone is interested in buying. The user will have to remove the POKEY chip from the motherboard of the 8-bit and place it on the interface board. A ribbon cable will connect the interface to the vacant POKEY socket.

There have been many replacements for the standard Atari OS released over the years. All of them have been considerable improvements over the original. And replacement ROM chips are still being produced. I notice that Stefan Dorndorf has released a version 4.0 of his QMEG+OS. Default drives can be switched from the keyboard. Happy drives will be run in high speed automatically. Two RAM disks can be set up. A disk copier is built in. Files can be loaded without DOS. BASIC and cartridges can be switched. And of course there is the usual monitor and program freezer. There is also a function that works something like John Pickens's XL2. QMEG+OS seems to have incorporated many of the features of Sparta DOS, MyCopyR, XL2 and OmniMON, all on one ROM chip.

While we are on operating systems, someone in Poland is inviting participation in an Atari 8-bit version of UNIX (which he calls ANIX). Also Andre Fachat in Germany has developed OS/A65. This is a multitasking and multi-threaded operating system for 6502 computers. It runs on his own custom computer and the Commodore 64. Andre is looking for others to port the code over to other 6502 machines. The kernel code is completely hardware independent. Only device drivers are

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News and Rumours

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ware used only the last two digits of the year and this will cause an ambiguity when the century turns. but what about Atari computers? If you are using software that draws upon the internal time in the ST, there should be no trouble for a while.This is because the Atari adds elapsed time to a set date in the computer. There has been some difference of opinion as to what the parameters are. The year is held in a seven bit space which gives a maximium of 127. If the base year is 1980, then Atari computers are good to 2107. Anyway our TOS computers should have no trouble slipping past the century.

Graphical Internet Demo

by Rowland Grant

The September general meeting featured John Towler's demonstration of his internet software. Since we couldn't attach John's TT to a telephone line in the library meeting room, John made up a simulation of his software. John uses STiK (ST internet connector) to connect with his web server. It still handles SLIP protocol. John uses Crystal Atari Browser or CAB 1.5 and its overlays to interpret the results. John uses Newsy as his Email and newsreader software. These are client files that CAB will run. John did a demonstration of frame capture. A TT or Falcon would the best bet for the Web. However CAB etc. will work with a ST using text mode.

Craig Carmichael demonstrated his new formulas for printing colour. The printer drivers work through OASES of course. The contrast scale is important. Also the results depend very much on the type of paper used by the printer. Craig brought his colour printer to show how it all works.

We had no demonstration for the October meeting. Having nothing much to report I would like to add the following dictionary (borrowed from the internet) to help make sense of my account of John Towler's demonstration.

PPP Point to Point Protocol, a protocol for transmitting network packets over a dial up modem or other serial connection. PPP's big advantage over SLIP is that it's not restricted to the TCP/IP protocol suite, and can transmit other network protocols.

SLIP Serial Line Internet Protocol, a protocol used to transmit TCP/IP over dial up and other serial connection.

TCP/IP Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol, a set of network protocols that assure the error-free delivery of network messages sent using IP (Internet Protocol)

SMTP Simple Mail Transfer Protocol, a protocol used to forward Email messages to and between mail servers on the Internet.

POP3 Post Office Protocol version 3, a protocol used to connect to a "Pop Server" and download Email messages for a specific user. There is a variation of POP3 that lets users send as well as receive Email messages.

NNTP Network News Transport Protocol, the protocol used to read, respond, and post Usenet news articles.

MTU Maximum Transmission Unit, the largest physical grouping of bytes, including the information required to format it for transmission, that can be sent on a physical medium.

PING Packet InterNet Groper, a program that lets you figure out if you can reach another node on The Net, and how long each message takes to reach it. Ping sends a message to the node you want to reach, and that node echos the message back.

MIME Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions, a method of transferring binary files via Email.

And there's lots more where that came from.

November Financial Statement

Date: Nov 13, 1997

EXPENSE SUMMARY - 1997

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YR-TO-DT
Printing	-	21.95	-	17.68	-	-	$114.15
News. post	26.39	-	24.99	24.86	-	-	$134.92
Postage	3.37	-	9.84	2.08	-	-	$24.81
Room rent	21.40	21.40	21.40	21.40	-	-	$214.00
Office sup	1.78	-	0.67	-	-	-	$11.47
Disks	-	-	-	-	-	-	$0.00
Telephone	-	-	-	-	-	-	$0.00
Advertise	-	-	-	-	-	-	$0.00
Mag. subsc	38.49	-	-	-	-	-	$73.49
Coffee sup	-	1.25	-	-	-	-	$24.91
Bank chg.	0.60	-	1.20	1.80	-	-	$7.80
Currency	-	-	-	-	-	-	$0.00
Society Ac	-	-	-	-	-	-	$15.00
Expen Misc	-	-	-	-	-	-	$0.00
Cash......	-	-	-	-	-	-	$0.00
Cash (Net)	-	-	-	-	-	-	$0.00
TOTAL	92.03	44.60	58.10	67.82	-	-	$620.55

INCOME SUMMARY - 1997

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YR-TO-DT
Dues	-	15.00	50.00	25.00	-	-	$530.00
PD disks	-	10.00	-	8.00	-	-	$69.00
Donations	-	-	-	-	-	-	$20.00
Coffee	-	4.50	3.25	3.00	-	-	$41.90
Bank intst	-	-	-	0.68	-	-	$1.32
Incom Misc	-	-	-	-	-	-	$0.00
TOTAL	-	29.50	53.25	36.68	-	-	$662.22
CASH FLOW	-92.03	-15.10	-4.85	-31.14	-	-	$41.67

New Library Disks

by Ted Skrecky

I have just completed a new update to the ST Library Catalogue. I have added another 3 disks which brings us up to Disk #202. I have also just received 2 disks from John Towler which contain all the programs you need in order to get on the Internet. Since the deadline for submissions to our club newsletter is almost here as I type this report, I don't have the time to examine the disks and add them to the library right this minute. However, since getting connected to the Internet is becoming quite a popular thing to do these days, I will have these disks properly catalogued and ready for distribution at the club meeting for November.

The software on the 3 new disks was either aquired via the Internet or had been taken from some of the old "disk of the months" which John Towler had put together for our club meetings. I have only added one game this time which is called Power Up, a demoversion of a car racing game from the Czech Republic. While having a look at this game, I couldn't find a copywrite date but I assume this must have been programmed recently as I have never seen it before. In this game, you look at your car from directly above the track. As your car starts to move, the screen scrolls, revealing more of the track. This game is like Power Drive Rally for the Atari Jaguar. The bad news is that the sound is not of award-winning quality. Reading the docs told me that Power Up supports the enhanced sound capabilities of the STe so maybe it sounds better on one of those machines. Also, the game play itself didn't excite me that much but, since I am not a big fan of car games, you might just want to try it for yourself. One thing I did notice that should boost the entertainment aspect of this game is that there is a split-screen mode so 2 players can race against each other.

One program which I found on an FTP site is the ProbeHouse Unit Converter, written by William Wong. This program is quite neat as it makes it real easy to find out stuff such as 10 feet is equal to 3,048,000 microns. This program will calculate the conversions for units of length, speed, volume, area, pressure, temperature, electric charge and much more. Another William Wong program I have catalogued is the ProbeHouse Expense Manager which can help you organize your finances.

We already have a version of the QED text editor in our library but it is in German. Version 3.9 which is on Disk #202 has everything in English. This text editor looks quite impressive so it is definitely worth having a look at. Version 4.2 of SilkMouse, the best mouse accelerator known to man, is on Disk #200. If you aren't already using SilkMouse, you should try it as it makes your ST feel like a new, infinitely more powerful computer. Even more so in high rez, it greatly decreases the amount of effort you have to exert in order to move the mouse pointer around the screen.

The last new program I will mention is the Beta version of the Oberon computing language which is on Disk #201. A Hard Drive is required and 2 megs of RAM is recommended. I haven't looked at this language myself but our club secretary, Rowland, has spent a bit of time playing with it. From what I have heard from Rowland, this doesn't sound like a beginners type of programming language. If you aren't already familiar with Oberon on another computer platform, you might not want to bother getting the ST version.

One last thing I would like to talk about is with respect to the "Disk of the Months" (DOMS) which are available at club meetings for $2. Many of the files on these disks have a .ZIP extender. You will need to use the ST version of the ZIP archiver to decompact these files. Version 2.6 of ST ZIP is available on Disk #144. ST ZIP has a very user friendly graphical interface but if anybody has problems figuring it out, please talk to me at a club meeting or you can phone me at 598-6173. Also, there are sometimes files with a .LZH extender on these DOMS which you might find will not uncompress with version 1.72 of UNLZH. The reason for this is because the .LZH file is using LH5 compression which UNLZH doesn't understand. You will need to use Version 2.01M of LHARC. LHARC isn't user friendly as you have to type stuff on a command-line. However, Version 1.09 of the Request LH5 Shell program will make using LHARC must easier to use. This Shell program which also contains Version 2.01M of LHARC can be found on Disk #98. If you don't like this Shell program, there are others in the club library. If you have any problems with .LZH files, don't forget you can always talk to me.

I don't have any other interesting things to say at this time so I will end this report by listing all the new files available in the club library as follows:

BOOTM215.LZH 89K #200-Bootmenu Version 2.15. Read file called README.TXT for info on converting program from German to English.
PHUNIT.LZH 79K #200-ProbeHouse Unit Converter. Conversion program for units of length, speed, volume, area, pressure, temperature, electric charge and lots more! Looks like a very useful program.

POWERUP.LZH 549K #200-Freeware Demoversion 1.0 of Power Up, a race car game for all ST computers with 1 meg of memory.

SLKMUS42.LZH 20K #200-SilkMouse Version 4.2. The best mouse accelerator for the Atari ST.

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Computer Dictionary

by Gordon F Hooper

Computer - The machine which you bought to make life easier which now causes all your troubles.

Diskette - A magnetic storage device which is useful as a coaster if you bend it, touch it or expose it to magnetic fields, liquids or heat.

Hard Drive - A device for mass storage. Approximately once a month they crash, which causes the irretrievable loss of all Accounts Receivable data.

RAMdisk - A wonderful device which allows you to lose hours of work simply by flicking one switch.

Monitor - A crude television which doesn't even have mindless sitcoms or gratuitous sex like network TV.

Printer - A device which causes many days of toil before you can force it to work with your computer.

Printer Ink Cartridge - A gadget which always runs out of ink at 4 am of the day your 100 page thesis is due.

Joystick - An input device used to entertain people who should find something useful to do with their time.

Docs - Instructions for software programs that are written by individuals who have absolutely no idea how to communicate with normal people like you and me.

Modem - A device to connect your computer to phone lines that results in phone bills of magnificent proportions, which the phone company loves.

Files - Work which has been written to disk using 8 letters and three extenders that are incomprehensible when the time comes to look for a desperately needed item.

Swear Words - Language required before your computer system will perform properly.

Lockups - Gods revenge for taking His name in vain.

MS DOS - Gods revenge on people who buy IBMs.

Atari

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had it." "Probably." Deaver watched the game. Same thing over and over again. "How much a thing like that cost?" "A lot. Maybe fifteen, twenty bucks." "Makes you want to barf. And here sits Lehi McKay, toodling his noodle like the old guys used to. All it ever got them was a sore noodle, Lehi. And slag for brains. "Drown it. I'm trying to concentrate." The game finally ended. Lehi set the black box on the workbench, turned off the machine, and stood up. End quote.

Question: What was the name of the game Lehi was playing?

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needed for other platforms. Andre uses his computer to control audio equipment using infrared signals. There are also vague reports that Andre has implemented a 6502 protocol stack to handle PPP or SLIP. Maybe that could be ported over to the Atari too.

William Kendrick Programs in Action! He recently released a game called Gem Drop. This has been given very good reviews, and is rated commercial quality. The game uses Graphics 12, multicoloured characters. The program flips between two fonts to create the simulated colours of the objects. The game is available on various 8-bit boards.

ABBUC, the Atari Bit Byter User Club, based in Herten Germany, has published its 50th issue of ABBUC Magazine. This represents more than 12 years of publication. The cover of this 32 page magazine was printed in gold ink. This issue was devoted to hardware, listing many of the devices available. There were also project reports such as connecting a ZIP drive to an XL/XE and one entitled "The XE-Notebook, not complete but...". The issue closed with an interesting discussion of how XL computers can run a Brother laser printer with flawless results. The trick is to use a Mac or Windows computer to set the printer, then attach the XL system and print a page using a program such as Print Shop or Daisy Dot. I presume that the Brother printer is Epson compatible. Congratulations to ABBUC, a remarkable Atari 8-bit club.

Congratulations, ABBUC!

WPG12.LZH 29K #200-Version 1.2. Shows pictures in WordPerfect WPG format and converts them to IMG format.

ACHEAT_M.LZH 26K #201-The Cheat Machine Version 3.0. Allows you to cheat at various ST games.
CONVERT.LZH 10K #201-Convert HTML to ASCII.
OBERON.LZH 675K #201-Beta release of ST-Oberon V4. Hard Drive required and 2 megs of RAM recommended. Read file called README.LZH for more info.
STDB12.LZH 70K #201-STDB - A Special Database for Diabetics Version 1.2. Medium Rez only.

CHIPCOMP.LZH 183K #202-XLR8 - Sentry Chip Composer Version 1.0.
PHEM2.LZH 106K #202-Probe House Expense Manager Version 2.0. Manage your daily expenses.
QED390.LZH 298K #202-QED Version 3.90 text editor. English version.
SBACKUP.LZH 176K #202-Fast Sector Backup Version 4.86. Release 3. Hard Drive backup program.

Microsoft vs. General Motors



Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates was discussing his company compared to General Motors recently. He claimed that if GM had done as well as Microsoft, we would be driving V32's instead of V8's and they would be capable of 10,000 miles per hour, or conversely, a car would weigh 30 pounds and get 10,000 miles per gallon.

When told of this, a GM spokesman said, "Maybe so, but would anyone buy a car that crashed twice a day?"

Thanks to Doug Skrecky for this clip.